

# POSITIVE DISCIPLINE

Insert Disc #2 from Day 2 CD-ROM.

## OBJECTIVES

Read (or have participants read) out loud.

The objectives of this module are to help you

- Understand the need for training and counseling before starting a progressive discipline program
- Focus on performance issues in the workplace
- Realize the importance of employee participation in the disciplinary process
- Understand the need for clear documentation and counseling during disciplinary meetings

Show slide #2. Play video clip, "Emperor's New Groove." Tell participants they are going to see an example of positive discipline. After the clip, ask, "What did you think about the way Cuzco handled the situation?"

## INTRODUCTION

Most people do not like to discipline others because of the negative aspects of this management activity. All too often discipline is understood to mean punishment which must always be included as part of the process. Punishment is a part of discipline but not the immediate focus.

### Discipline Defined

Show slide #3. According to Webster's Dictionary, discipline is (see right):

"Training to act in accordance with rules. A regimen that develops or improves a skill. Punishment inflicted by way of correction and training. Behavior in accord with rules and conduct. A branch of instruction or learning."

Say, "Notice that punishment is the third entry of five. The other four deal with correction through training and instruction."

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Types of Discipline

### Discipline in the Workplace

Discipline on the job is about directing an individual's behavior to increase performance. There are people who recognize and correct performance by themselves, which is called self-discipline.

When people do not use self-discipline in the workplace, we as managers need to step in and help the employee understand the rules, expectations, or goals of the situation. This allows us to run an efficient, effective workplace, and it is what employees expect of management.

## TYPES OF DISCIPLINE

Read (or have participants read) out loud.

The goal of discipline is to change workplace performance in a positive, constructive way or prevent further rule violations.

### Negative Discipline

Traditionally, discipline in the workplace has been delivered in a negative way. Delivering any message in a negative way, regardless of the reason, will be received with defensiveness and opposition. Negative discipline is one of the biggest de-motivators in the working world.

### Positive Discipline

Positive discipline is an essential tool for managers who need to correct an employee's behavior but want to preserve that employee's self-esteem and job motivation.

#### Positive discipline

- Focuses on the workplace behavior, never the person
- Seeks to correct workplace performance, not to punish employees

One way to instill in our employees a desire to change behavior through discipline is to let them know why they need to change. The "why" needs to be delivered in a positive way.

## FAIR, CONSISTENT APPLICATION OF DISCIPLINE

Read (or have participants read) out loud.

Discipline must be fair and consistent. Every time somebody does something wrong, everybody else is watching to see how management will handle the situation. When the approach from management is fair and consistent, employees understand that when their job performance is below standard or rules are broken, management will address the situation.

### The Hot Stove Rule of Discipline

Douglas McGregor, a management theorist, developed what is called the "hot stove rule" of discipline which says:

When you touch a hot stove, it burns you, and the burn is immediate.

The theory is based on the behavior of touching the stove; it does not matter who you are—low performer or high performer—or when you touched it. It will still burn you.

Discipline should be applied in the same way—immediate and impartial to all employees. By taking this objective approach

- You will be fair and consistent
- Your discipline will be based on behavior
- Your employees will know what to expect from you as their manager

## DOCUMENTATION

Read (or have participants read) out loud.

Keeping accurate documentation is a habit you should develop. Write down significant events that happen with your direct reports, such as

- Conversations about work assignments
- Informal counseling or coaching sessions
- Good work kudos
- Customer complaints
- Disciplinary actions

### Keeping Documentation

Most managers keep documentation in their day planner, a computer file, or a paper file. Wherever you keep it, your documentation should be

- Accessible

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Documentation

- Up-to-date
- In a format that will let you use it on a regular basis
- A record of your efforts to help your employees succeed

If something is important enough to write down, it is important enough to discuss with the employee. Do not keep secret notes.

Progressive Discipline

## Lawsuits

Important facts about lawsuits:

- In the event of a lawsuit, your decision to discipline or terminate an employee may not come before the court for up to five years.
- Juries are more sympathetic to the employee than to the company.
- You must write down all important events and store your files in a safe place.
- Many lawsuits are lost because the manager could not find the necessary documentation to support the discipline or termination.
- If you cannot produce accurate documentation, Fred Meyer, and possibly you personally, could face considerable attorney, court, and settlement costs.

## PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE

Read (or have participants read) out loud.

Progressive discipline is designed to give the employee an opportunity to correct a performance problem. Management cannot make or force employees to solve a performance problem, but we can give employees an opportunity to correct the problem themselves.

Fred Meyer has a progressive disciplinary procedure that should be followed by all management personnel.

### Informal Progressive Disciplinary Steps

Informal disciplinary steps carry no threat to the employee's job or job security:

- Training and counseling
  - ▶ The goal of training and counseling is to prepare the employee to succeed.
  - ▶ You must talk to the employee and document your conversation.
- Consequence line
  - ▶ The consequence line is crossed when the informal actions have not remedied the performance. (The employee has not chosen to correct the performance issue.)
  - ▶ You and the employee must now enter into formal actions.

Facts, Objectives, Solutions, Actions

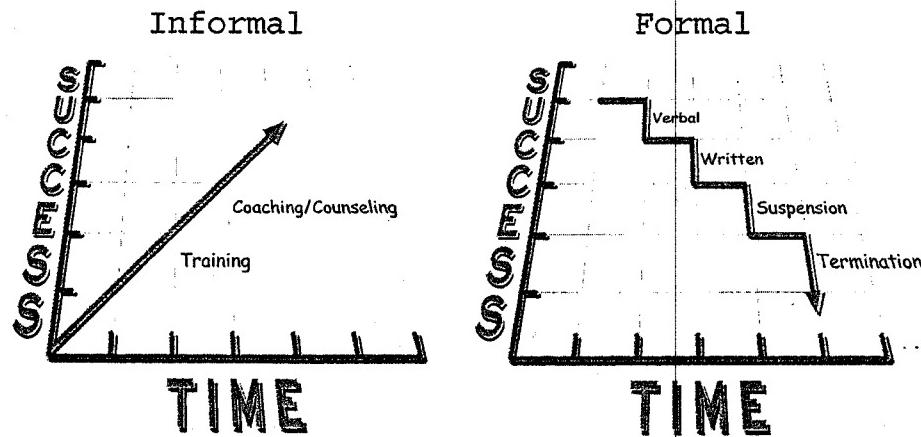
### Formal Progressive Disciplinary Steps

Formal actions mean that you do the following:

- Talk with the employee
- Document information about your conversation
- Complete the Employee Warning Notice (M-1650) and have the employee sign the Employee Responsibility Form (M-1398)
- Tell the employee that his or her job is in jeopardy and that copies of write ups will be put in their employee file
- Talk with your regional human resources supervisor to discuss how you will proceed with these steps

Show slide #4.

Talk to each point for clarification.



### FACTS, OBJECTIVES, SOLUTIONS, ACTIONS

Read (or have participants read) out loud.

At Fred Meyer we have a few acronyms, and here is one more for you, **FOSA**—Facts, Objectives, Solutions, and Actions. The FOSA model, from Mike Deblieux's book *Documenting Discipline*, will help you write warnings clearly.

## Facts

- Facts include the five Ws:
  - ▶ What
  - ▶ When
  - ▶ Where
  - ▶ Who
  - ▶ Why
- It is important to separate facts from emotion, opinions, and conclusions.

## Comparing conclusions and facts

- Here is a description of a work project that is based on conclusions:
  - ▶ "Your report is late. It was the worst report I've read in years. It left out all the important information. There was no way I could release it to the Board of Directors."
- Let's describe the same report using facts:
  - ▶ "Your report was due January 11. On January 10, you assured me you were almost done writing it. I received your report on January 14. When I asked you why it was late, you told me, 'Deadlines are so artificial. What's a day here or there?'"
  - ▶ "When I read the report, I found seven misspelled words. The pages were numbered 1, 2, 3, 7, 9, and 12."
  - ▶ "The report did not have an executive summary as required by our board of director's report format."
  - ▶ "It did not include a financial analysis. My December 12 memo to you states, 'The board report must include a detailed financial analysis.'"
- Notice how the example based on facts is free of emotion and conclusions. If you have trouble with the facts of a situation consider using the following:
  - ▶ I saw...
  - ▶ I heard...
  - ▶ I touched...
  - ▶ I smelled...
- If your statements are factual, they probably will support your conclusions.

Facts, Objectives, Solutions, Actions

*Example:* "Laurie, I saw you report to the stock room at 8:10 A.M. You are scheduled to report to work at 8:00 A.M. I heard you tell Carter that you overslept because your alarm clock didn't go off."

When you read this statement, you conclude that the employee was 10 minutes late because she failed to check her alarm clock.

### Practical examples

Here are some examples of factual statements that can help you properly document employee behavior.

Conclusion	Fact
You were late.	I saw you report to the stock room at 8:35 A.M. (sight)
You are a thief.	I heard you tell Sarah that you took the money. (hearing)
You didn't clear the floor.	When I made my tour of the floor, I had to remove four boxes from aisle 25. (touch)
You didn't rinse the mop.	When I smelled the mop, I could smell the milk; it smelled sour. (smell)

Subjective statements are used to prove a point; however, always support them with facts. For example:

Subjective Statement	Factual Statement
You are hostile.	On February 1, March 3, and March 28, you used the words "damn you" and "go to hell" to other employees in front of Customers.
You are a poor salesperson.	In March, you sold \$2500. This is 40 percent below your quota and 25 percent below the minimum standard.
Your cleanup was terrible.	When you finished at the prep station, you did not clean and sanitize to finish the job. You left the dirty knife and dirty mixing bowl on the prep table for three hours.

## Objectives

Managers frequently assume that employees know, or should know, what to do on the job. Assumptions often lead to problems. Unless you can prove that you told an employee what you expect, you cannot hold that employee responsible for meeting those expectations.

If you want your disciplinary action to be successful, you must be able to document that the employee knew exactly what you wanted him or her to do.

Objectives need to be:

- Specific
- Positive
- Required
- Complete

### Practical examples of objectives

Here are some examples of objectives that meet these four criteria:

Issue	Documentation
Attendance	In the future, I expect you to be at work and ready to begin working at 8:00 A.M. each day you are scheduled.
Cleanliness	You must maintain a clean checkstand. This means <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Cleaning up liquid or powder spills</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Keeping the bags in their proper slot</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Put all savable paper in the correct envelopes</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Sweep your area and the Customer area around your checkstand once an hour</li></ul> These actions will be done each day you work or expectations will not be met.
Deadlines	In the future, I expect you to complete your monthly status report by the first working day of the month—typed, proofread, and corrected.

Facts, Objectives, Solutions, Actions

## Solutions

Get the employee involved in deciding what the solution to the problem is going to be. Once you have agreed upon the solution, document it.

### Examples of solutions

Here are some examples of written solutions.

Issue	Documentation
Coaching	I will work with you on increasing the amount of freight you throw from 50 cases per hour to 60 cases per hour.
Resource person	If you have questions about the schedule, you may ask Paul. Remember that all schedule considerations must be made two weeks before the work week.
Resource materials	I have ordered the signing standards sheets for the HOM department. These standards will answer the questions you have as you build the displays.

## Actions

The last step in the FOSA model is to document the action you intend to take if the employee does not meet your objectives. In documenting and communicating, you must be sure that the employee understands

- The specific action you are taking now (for example, a verbal warning or a written warning)
- The action you will take if the employee's behavior falls short of your objectives

An action communicates the seriousness of the situation and your commitment to seeing the employee resolve the performance issue. It also puts the employee on notice that his or her job is in jeopardy.

Summary

**Examples of actions**

Here are some sample actions.

Action	Documentation
Counseling	I will meet with you in 14 days to see if your tardiness has improved.
Written warning	I am giving you a written warning that will be placed in your personnel file. If you do not meet the objectives that we have agreed upon, you will be subject to further disciplinary actions, up to and including termination.
Suspension	You will be suspended for three days without pay beginning immediately. If you do not meet the objectives that we have agreed upon, you will be subject to further disciplinary actions, up to and including termination.

**SUMMARY**

Read (or have participants read) out loud.

The goal of discipline is to change workplace performance or prevent further rule violations. Too often discipline is only thought of as a way to "get rid of" the problem employee. If applied properly, discipline will communicate to the employee the need to change.

Show slide #5.

**Steps for Positive Discipline**

When dealing with a performance problem, make sure you document the following when you talk to your employee:

- Identify the performance problem.

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- Get the employee's view of the performance problem.

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- Ask the employee for a solution to the performance problem.

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- Agree on a plan to address the performance problem.

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- Give the employee a verbal or written warning.

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- Set up a follow-up session.

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Summary

### Positive Approach

Be sure that you take a positive approach to any disciplinary session. This accomplishes several things:

- It shows the employee that you are interested in the employee's success enough to explain what is required to achieve success.
- It demonstrates to employees that Fred Meyer is a fair, enjoyable place to work where we support and train our employees to succeed.
- As employees succeed, so do you, the store, and Fred Meyer.